

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, DR
SUBJECT: BALAGUER MEETS PRD CANDIDATES AND OTHER CAMPAIGN DEVELOP-
MENTS

REF: SANTO DOMINGO 1317

1. A FOUR-POINT ELECTORAL "NON-GRESSION PACT" IS EXPECTED TO BE SIGNED SHORTLY BETWEEN PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S REFORMIST PARTY (PR) AND OPPOSITION DOMINICAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PRD). PROPOSED PACT WAS PRINCIPAL RESULT OF MEETING MARCH 10 AT NATIONAL PALACE BETWEEN PRESIDENT BALAGUER AND PRD PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES ANTONIO GUZMAN AND JACOBO MAJLUTA. RESULTS OF MEETING WERE ANNOUNCED IN SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY TWO PRD LEADERS. PALACE, WHICH GAVE EXTENSIVE PHOTO COVERAGE TO EVENT, DID NOT OFFER COMMENT ON MEETING.

2. PACT WOULD INCLUDE AGREEMENT THAT (A) MAY 16 ELECTIONS BE HELD PEACEFULLY, (B) RESULTS BE SCRUPULOUSLY RESPECTED, (C) ALL ELECTION PARTICIPANTS SUPPORT PROGRAMS OF GOVERNMENT OF WINNING PARTY, AND (D) SAFETY OF INDIVIDUALS
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OF DEFEATED PARTY BE GUARANTEED.

3. OTHER AREAS OF DISCUSSION TOUCHED UPON IN 40-MINUTE MEETING, ACCORDING TO PRD LEADERS, WERE THEIR INTEREST THAT ARMED FORCES AND NATIONAL POLICE NOT INTERVENE IN ELECTORAL PROCESS; USE BY PRD OF GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED TELEVISION NETWORK; AND LIFTING OF RE-ENTRY PROHIBITION

AGAINST AN EXILED PRD ACTIVIST. BALAGUER, ACCORDING TO PRD CANDIDATES, ALSO EXPRESSED PLEASURE OVER UPCOMING VISIT, AT INVITATION OF PRD, OF PORTUGUESE PRIME MINISTER MARIO SOARES AND QUOTED THE PRESIDENT AS SAYING HE WOULD EXTEND TO SOARES WELCOME DUE A VISITING CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT. IN ADDITION PRD LEADERS MET AT PALACE WITH VICE PRESIDENT GOICO MORALES AND NUMEROUS SENIOR GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS, INCLUDING ARMED FORCES SECRETARY BEAUCHAMP.

4. MAJLUTA SAID QUESTION OF OCCASIONAL MILITARY INTERFERENCE IN PRD CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES WAS TOUCHED ON IN CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT. HE ADDED HOWEVER, "WE DEALT WITH THE PROBLEM, LIMITING IT TO THE PLACES WHERE THERE HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN INCONVENIENCES, NOT GENERALIZING IT, BECAUSE IT IS NOT A GENERAL PROBLEM".

5. BALAGUER MEETING WITH PRD LEADERS WAS HAILED BY BOTH MAJOR NEWSPAPERS THIS MORNING AS POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN GUARANTEEING PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. FOR EXAMPLE, LISTIN DIARIO COMMENTED "AN INCUMBENT PRESIDENT, WHO IS SAT THE SAME TIME A PARTY LEADER AND ASPIRANT FOR REELECTION DOES NOT USUALLY, IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, MEET WITH HIS ADVERSARIES, OR OFFER THEM GUARANTEES FOR THE FULL EXERCISE OF THEIR RIGHTS...WE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT THERE HAS APPEARED AN IRREVERSIBLE CURRENT OF CORDIALITY, WHICH DOES NOT IMPLY CONFORMITY, IN DOMINICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICAL LIFE".

6. MEETING WAS WARMLY GREETED ALSO BY LEADING CHURCH FIGURE, BISHOP HUGO POLANCO BRITO OF HIGUEY. POLANCO BRITO URGED THAT BALAGUER ALSO MEET WITH LEADERS OF OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES, URGED MILITARY TO RESPECT ELECTORAL PROCESS, AND CALLED ON POLITICIANS TO AVOID INSULTING LANGUAGE IN CAMPAIGN.

7. POLANCO BRITO'S REMARKS FOLLOW ISSUANCE OF PASTORAL LETTER, DATED MARCH 8, BY DOMINICAN COUNCIL OF BISHOPS CONCERNING ELECTIONS. LONG LETTER URGED DOMINICANS TO VOTE THEIR CONSCIENCE FOR GREATER GOOD OF NATION, CALLED ON POLITICAL PARTIES TO OFFER GENUINE SOLUTIONS TO COUNTRY'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WHILE RESPECTING ONE ANOTHER'S RIGHTS, AND ASKED THAT ELECTION RESULTS BE RESPECTED.

8. COMMENT: ELECTION CAMPAIGN CONTINUES TO DEVELOP NORMALLY TO DATE, AND PRESIDENT'S MEETINGS WITH OPPOSITION PRD LEADERS CAN BE IMPORTANT STEP IN ESTABLISHING PEACEFUL CLIMATE VERY MUCH DESIRED BY ALL SIDES HERE. RECENT MORAL WEIGHT OF NORMALLY APOLITICAL CHURCH IN FAVOR OF PEACEFUL AND HONEST CAMPAIGN IS ANOTHER ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT. MEANWHILE

POLITICAL CIRCLES AWAIT UPCOMING BIG EVENTS: THE REFORMIST PARTY CONVENTION, WHICH WILL FORMALLY NOMINATE BALAGUER AND IN WHICH HIS CHOSEN VICE-PRESIDENTIAL RUNNING MATE WILL BE REVEALED, BEGINS TOMORROW, MARCH 14; SELECTION OF PR CANDIDATES FOR OTHER NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICES, MARCH 16; THE ARRIVAL OF PM SOARES AND SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL, MARCH 17-20 AND ACCOMPANYING PRD SECOND SOLIDARITY SEMINAR; AND FINALLY A MASSIVE PEASANTS MARCH FOR BALAGUER PLANNED FOR MARCH 18.
HURWITCH

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